A

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For the better PROVIDING for

The Poor of the City of Edinburgh,

By an ALTERATION of

The Syſtem of Management

OF

The CHARITY-WORKHOUSE.

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Drawn up for the information of a committee appointed by the Judges of the Court of Seſſion, and the Lord Provoſt and Magiſtrates, for the purpoſe of inſpecting the management of that charitable eſtabliſhment;

And now humbly ſubmitted to the conſideration of the Inhabitants.

BY

A CITIZEN of EDINBURGH.

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PLAN

For the better PROVIDING for

The Poor of the City of Edinburgh.

THE Charity-workhouſe of Edinburgh was erected in the year 1740.

Before that period, the miniſters and elders of the different pariſhes of the city (compoſing that judicature known in this country by the name of the *kirk-ſeſſion*), with the concurrence of the magiſtrates and town-council, had the ſuperintendence of the poor, and the diſtribution of the funds for their ſupport, ariſing from the collections at the church-doors, and other branches allotted for that purpoſe, in conformity with the various acts of the parliament of Scotland for the poor's maintenance. But this ſyſtem of ſupporting the poor in their own houſes, under the direction of the kirk-ſeſſion, though the beſt that can be in country-pariſhes, where the miniſter and elders are, or ought to be, intimately acquainted with the circumſtances and reſpective merits of every pariſhioner, will ever be found very inadequate to that end in large and populous towns; where, from the number of poor, their obſcure ſituation, mingled as they are with the general multitude, and the unavoidable diſtractions attendant on the

duties of the miniſter, as well as elders, the temptations to fraud on the part of the poor are very great, and the means of detection by the kirk-ſeſſion next to impoſſible. In order to remedy this inconvenience, a public-ſpirited citizen, Mr Colhoun, who at that time filled the office of chief magiſtrate, with general approbation, firſt conceived the idea of a receptacle for the poor, which ſhould unite the advantages of an alms-houſe, and a houſe of induſtry. He accordingly formed the plan of the preſent Charity-wôrkhouſe; and ſet on foot a voluntary ſubſcription; which he carried on with ſuch ſucceſsful induſtry, that the houſe was very ſoon erected in its preſent form. His next ſtep was, to contrive a proper ſyſtem of management; and in order to give it a legal ſtability, a contract was entered into between the magiſtrates on the one part, as guardians of the city, and the general kirk-ſeſſions on the other, as the ſuperintendents of the poor. Among other articles, this contract, ſigned the 11th of February 1740, declares, "That a hoſpital, or workhouſe, ſhould "be built, for the more regular maintenance and "employment of the whole poor of the city, and "for taking proper care of orphans and found-"lings;—that the collection for the poor at "church-doors and at Epiſcopal meeting-houſes, "fines for marriages not ſolemnized in church, "one third of the fees of the dead or paſſing bell, "burial-warrants, green turfs *, poor's box at the "Grayfriars gate, mortified money †, houſes, and "ſhops, poor's rate of two per cent. fornication-"fines ‡, legacies, and L. 200 to be paid annually

* Theſe three are ſmall fees paid at funerals for the uſe of the poor of the pariſh.

† Money in mortmain.

‡ Money exacted from the parents for the maintenance of baſtard children by the kirk-treaſurer, to prevent the public from bein burdened by ſuch children.

"out

" out of the revenue of the city of Edinburgh, " ſhall be appropriated for the more regular an- " nual maintenance and employment of the poor " of the city that ſhall be admitted into the ſaid " hoſpital, and for taking proper care of orphans " and foundlings, and for granting ſupplies to out- " penſioners, not exceeding L. 200 Sterling year- " ly." At a general meeting of the contributors to the building, the ſyſtem of internal management of the houſe was adjuſted, and the mode of chuſing managers, and of admitting poor into the houſe, was eſtabliſhed; which has been ever ſince adhered to, with very little variation.

The houſe was accordingly finiſhed, and opened for the reception of poor.

It was ſoon diſcovered, however, that thoſe funds allotted by the contract for the ſupport of the houſe, were by no means equal to the unavoidable expence of the eſtabliſhment: ſo that in little more than two years after its being opened, the managers found themſelves a-ground for want of money; and they were therefore forced to have recourſe to the generoſity of the inhabitants, by ſoliciting a public general collection: which was ſo liberal as to give a temporary relief from their difficulties. This, however, was of ſhort continuance; for in three years more they were again at a ſtand, and obliged to apply as before. The conſideration of this ſtate of the workhouſe, induced ſome of the leading men in the town-council to form a plan of applying to parliament for leave to levy a general poor's rate on the inhabitants, large enough for the ſupport of the poor, without the aid of voluntary contribution, either at the church-doors, or in any other ſhape. They juſtified this application to the legiſlature, by the ſpecious pretence of throwing the burden of ſupporting the poor more equally on all the inhabitants: by ſuch a tax, they hoped to include thoſe who were diſſenters, of whatever denomination,

mination, from the eſtabliſhed church; conſequently who contributed nothing to the collection at the church-doors; though theſe collections had always compoſed the greateſt part of the annual revenue of the houſe. The very mention of a general poor's rate inſtantly raiſed a flame in the city; and a large body of the inhabitants united in a vigorous oppoſition to it on more ſolid reaſons. They argued, that it was a decided folly, for men, with their eyes open, to load themſelves with a tax, which, in our neighbouring country, had become a moſt intolerable burden, and had degenerated into the moſt palpable abuſe. This oppoſition effectually defeated the ſcheme; but did not remedy the deficiency of funds: for the managers were obliged to ſolicit public collections in 1752, 1758, 1765, 1767, 1772, and 1774. Before this laſt collection, the diſtreſſes of the houſe had been ſo great, that the managers (of whom the writer was at that time one) were forced to pledge their perſonal credit at the bank for a loan of L. 1200. Such indeed has been the charitable attention of the nobility, gentry, and citizens, to this very uſeful inſtitution, that, including a collection in the year 1775, hereafter to be mentioned, no leſs a ſum has been contributed by public general collections, ſince the opening of the houſe, than L. 10,735 Sterling, over and above the conſtant and regular collections at church-doors; a circumſtance which reflects the higheſt honour on all ranks in the city.

The managers, however, were naturally alarmed by the neceſſity of making ſuch frequent and repeated appeals to the public generoſity; and, anno 1775, began very ſeriouſly to enquire, if it was poſſible to concert ſome ſcheme, by which the funds of the houſe might be rendered ſufficient for its ſupport.

They ſaw, indeed, that thoſe collections had been more or leſs frequent, according as the prices of proviſions were high or low. For the difference of the price of grain, the ſtaple article uſed in the maintenance

maintenance of the poor of the houſe, was alone a ſufficient cauſe of greater expence at one time than at another. About 1250 bolls of meal, 300 bolls of bear, and 230 bolls of wheat, are annually conſumed in the houſe. Meal had been purchaſed ſo low as 8s. and 10s. per boll; but for ſome time paſt, it had coſt 15s. and 16s.; and other grain in proportion. It ſhould be obſerved, too, that eight or nine years of high prices, had added greatly to the number of poor.

But although theſe reaſons might ſerve to account how the funds had fallen ſhort of the expences of the houſe, they did not anſwer the end of the enquiry ſet on foot by the managers; which was principally intended to diſcover how thoſe cauſes might be counteracted from whence the deficiency had ariſen; otherwiſe they dreaded that they ſhould, from year to year, find themſelves involved in the ſame difficulties. Although they had endeavoured to conduct the buſineſs of the houſe as frugally, and as well as they could, according to the ſyſtem on which it is at preſent conſtituted; with an exception, no doubt, of various abuſes that have crept in, and have eſcaped their notice; they now began to ſuſpect, that there muſt be ſome radical error in the conſtitution itſelf; and that a new ſyſtem of management might poſſibly be contrived, which might tend to correct thoſe abuſes, and to remove, in ſome meaſure, thoſe difficulties which daily preſented themſelves.

With this view, the managers found it neceſſary to preſent a memorial to the magiſtrates and town-council, and the general kirk-ſeſſions, the contracting parties by whom the houſe had been at firſt erected. This occaſioned a conference between the magiſtrates and judges of the court of ſeſſion, at which ſome of the managers aſſiſted; and a committee was named, conſiſting of two of the judges, two of the magiſtrates, two advocates, two writers

to

to the ſignet, two of the miniſters of the city, and two of the managers, for the purpoſe of examining the conſtitution and management of the workhouſe; in order that ſome plan might be contrived for correcting abuſes, reducing the expence, and increaſing the funds of the houſe. In the mean time, as a temporary relief, the magiſtrates and court of ſeſſion authoriſed the public general collection in 1775.

The committee accordingly met. There were preſent, the Lord Provoſt (Mr Stodart), Lord Gardenſton, Lord Covington, John Swinton advocate, John Maclaurin advocate, Archibald Cockburn ſheriff of Edinburgh, Walter Scott writer to the ſignet, the Reverend Dr Dryſdale, the Reverend Mr Brown, Sir William Forbes, Alexander Hunter, William Mercer, and Richard Richardſon, the treaſurer of the workhouſe. The following plan was laid before them, and canvaſſed at two different meetings; at the laſt of which, on the 20th July 1775, a report was drawn up, approving of the plan, and recommending the carrying it into execution: but, from what cauſe the writer knows not, the report was never preſented to the court of ſeſſion; nor has any ſubſequent attempt been made to revive the conſideration of it. The fall in the price of proviſions has enabled the managers to go on with leſs difficulty than before, and all idea of reforming the management, as pointed out in the plan, has been laid aſide. As the writer, who had ſome hand in drawing up the plan at firſt, is perfectly convinced, however, not only of the neceſſity of an alteration in the ſyſtem of the houſe, but of the propriety of the mode here pointed out, it is now humbly ſubmitted to the attention of his fellow-citizens, whoſe generous ſupport of, and liberal contributions to that eſtabliſhment, proves the ſenſe they have of its importance and utility: at the ſame time that it reflects the higheſt honour on their benevolence and humanity.

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The preſent enquiry ſhall, for the ſake of method, conſider the ſubject in two views; with an eye to leſſen the expences of the internal management; and to increaſe the funds of the houſe.

I. The numbers of people ſupported by the Charity-workhouſe were accurately taken up in June 1774. The numbers were,

102 men,
306 women,
101 boys,
101 girls,
} who live in the houſe.

119 children at board in the country.
78 quarterly penſioners.
73 weekly penſioners.
28 lunatics in bedlam.
25 criminals in the houſe of correction, or bridewell.
13 beggars ſeized in the ſtreets, and in confinement in the houſe of correction.
11 houſe-keeper, clerks, and other ſervants of the family.

957

And, by an average of eight years, from 1765 to 1773, the annual expence of ſupporting theſe amounted to L. 3544 : 19 : 6.——Vide printed report of the preſent ſtate of the Charity-workhouſe, 23d June 1773.

As no later ſurvey has been made, (20th July 1775,*) it ſhall be the ground-work of the preſent inveſtigation: it is believed not to be very far different from the preſent ſtate of the family.

For each of the children in the country, (who are all under five years), a board of 20s. per quarter is paid while they are at the breaſt, and 16s. 8d. per quarter after they are weaned; beſides cloaths, which coſt the houſe annually about 20s. a-piece more. The children who live in the houſe, are

* The date of preſenting the plan to the committee.

of different ages, from four or five years, at which period they are uſually taken from their keepers in the country, to the age of twelve or fourteen years, when they are put apprentices to buſineſs, or ſent to ſervice.

The plan of bringing up children in the Charity-workhouſe ſeems to be liable to a variety of objections. Although they are very carefully inſtructed in reading, and the principles of religion, and are taught to work as early as they are capable of it, it is abſolutely impoſſible to prevent their being corrupted and debauched by the multitude of old people, with whom they muſt conſtantly and unavoidably mix in ſociety within doors; from whom they often acquire habits of idleneſs, if they learn nothing worſe: conſequently do not perform near ſo much work as they might do. It is alſo but too obvious, that the health of children educated in a workhouſe, where they are crouded together, without a proper degree of freſh air and exerciſe, muſt often be greatly impaired; and ſometimes to ſo great a degree, that children, ſtrong and healthy at their firſt reception, grow decrepid and diſeaſed, ſo as to be diſabled from labour; and, conſequently, become a uſeleſs burden on the public during the whole of their lives. It has therefore been judged more expedient by ſome, to aboliſh entirely the practice of rearing children in the houſe, and to bring them up altogether in the country. Many of the advantages to be expected from ſuch an alteration, are founded on that artificial affection (if the expreſſion may be uſed) which nurſes and foſterers contract for the children they rear, often little ſhort of the natural affection they bear to their own children. If children are boarded in the families of cottagers, not more than two or three in one houſe, according as there may be more or fewer children already belonging to each family; and never in Edinburgh, nor in any very large village; but not further

ther removed from town than within a circuit of five miles, ſo that the keepers may eaſily preſent the children to the inſpection of the managers regularly each quarter when the board is paid; it is preſumed the children would gradually be incorporated, as it were, with the families where they are boarded; and would ſhare the ſame fate, in a manner, with the cottagers own children, in puſhing through the world. Thus, inſtead of a number of diſeaſed, corrupted, idle, and unhealthy boys and girls; there would be a ſet of ſturdy, virtuous members of the community; the girls fit for country-ſervice, the boys for huſbandry or manufactures, or very proper, in every reſpect, for the navy. It is not doubted, that captains of men of war would think themſelves lucky to get ſuch boys on board their veſſels.

The board for children on the breaſt would be 20 s. per quarter, as at preſent; it might be reduced to . from the time they are weaned, until ſeven years old: but from that age they would become uſeful to the family, both within and without doors, and the board may be reduced to s. per quarter, until the age of twelve years; when their labour may be ſuppoſed equal to their maintenance, and they may then ſhift for themſelves. In regard to cloaths, the expence would be the ſame as at preſent.

It may appear a difficulty, in what ſhape the children thus brought up entirely in the country, can receive education or inſtruction of any kind. But it ſhould be remembered, that education, by which is meant no more than learning to read and repeat the catechiſm, is extremely cheap at little village-ſchools; not above 1 s. per quarter: and that in this reſpect, as in every other, they would be on the preciſe ſame footing with the children of the family where they are boarded. Or, if it ſhould be thought improper to truſt their education, limited

as it is meant to be, to the diſcretion of the keepers, the workhouſe may be at the expence of it: to pay ſchool-fee for each child, for a year or two of its life, at a proper age, would be but a trifle of additional expence; and the ſchoolmaſter ſhould give a receipt quarterly, certifying the attendance of his pupils. It is believed, that poor cottagers in the country would moſt gladly take charge of charity-children in this manner: for although the board be but ſmall, it is always a ſum certain, on which they can depend at the quarter-day, for the payment of their rent, or any other exigency; and a very ſmall ſum of money makes a great addition to the frugal œconomy of a poor man's family. In fact, thoſe who at preſent have children boarded with them, are often moſt unwilling to part with them, from an affection which they contract for the children; and the managers have had many inſtances of their conſenting to keep them at half-board, or even for no board at all, rather than bring them into the houſe.

By this plan of rearing the children in the country, beſides their being more healthy, it is believed there would be a very conſiderable ſaving of expence. At preſent, their maintenance in the houſe is conſtant and regular, while their work turns to little account. As a good many may be ſuppoſed to arrive at one time at a proper age for buſineſs, it is much more difficult to put out a number of boys and girls to ſervice or apprenticeſhips all at once, than when they are already diſtributed in different corners of the country, and on the outlook themſelves for work in their own neighbourhood; they often remain, therefore, a burden on the houſe for a longer time, and at a more advanced age, than they ſhould do. There are, too, about twelve women employed in the different wards, to take care of the children; there are ſix teachers to inſtruct them in reading; and four perſons employed, who teach them

them to work, and overſee them at their labour. The moſt, if not all, of thoſe perſons, thus employed, would become unneceſſary; or, at leaſt, might be reduced to the ſhort allowance after mentioned, until they could find employment for themſelves elſewhere. There is an annual expence of about L. 30 Sterling, for ſpirits, white-wine, and powder-ſugar, employed, or *ſaid* to be employed, in ſack-whey, &c. for the children, which would be totally ſaved.

Should this plan be preferred to the preſent method, the alteration could be made without any great difficulty. It is only required to board the children with country-people, who are daily deſirous of ſuch a charge. It would probably be neceſſary indeed, to pay a little more board at firſt for the elder children, than what is above mentioned, or than may be needful afterwards: for the boys, in particular, who have been educated in the workhouſe, could not, all at once, become ſo uſeful in doing the work of a country-family, as children would be who had grown up in that family from their infancy. As ſoon as all the children were thus diſpoſed of, all unneceſſary attendants on them ſhould be diſcharged, or reduced to a ſhort allowance, until they could otherwiſe diſpoſe of themſelves.

Thus far with regard to the children at preſent in the workhouſe. But it is farther eſſentially neceſſary to make a great reformation as to thoſe hereafter to be admitted.

It appears by the printed report, 23d June 1773, that although there were only 28 children at nurſe in 1765, the number had ſwelled, before 1772, to no fewer than 138. Of theſe, ſome have ſince been brought into the houſe, ſo as to reduce the number now in the country to 119, as above mentioned. It cannot be denied, that a great proportion of this increaſe has ariſen from a greater number of children than uſual having been turned over on the

houſe

houſe by the kirk-treaſurer. How it has happened, that they have increaſed ſo greatly on his hands, is a point which it is impoſſible here to explain: that officer's employment is a buſineſs of ſecrecy; and his accounts conſiſt entirely, with regard to the children at leaſt, of blank articles, which do not admit of any inveſtigation. Yet ſurely ſomething ſhould be done, to check ſo enormous and growing an evil. The kirk-treaſurer's duty is certainly to preſerve the public from being injured by the burden of illegitimate children. When, therefore, he receives a child of a parent able to maintain it, he ought certainly to inſiſt on his being paid a ſum amply ſufficient for its ſupport, upon a calculation of the chance of its living to the age of ten or twelve years old; at which period it may be ſuppoſed to be no longer any extraordinary burden. If indeed he ſhall be convinced that the father is not able to pay ſo large a ſum all at once, he muſt take what he can get; otherwiſe he may loſe all, by rigidly adhering to his rule: but when he accepts of part of the fine in the mean time, he ſhould be careful to take a bond from the father, to pay the whole, if, from any change of circumſtances, he ſhould ever be able. The children thus received, inſtead of being ſent by the kirk-treaſurer to nurſe, ſhould be ſent directly to the Charity-workhouſe, under a warrant from the kirk-treaſurer, to be under the direction of the managers; and not be kept until he go out of office, when, according to the preſent practice, he ſends them all together to the workhouſe. Even among the lower claſſes of life, ſuch as ſervants and work-people, he ſhould take both father and mother bound, under regular indentures, to allow a part of their reſpective wages for the ſupport of their illegitimate offspring; which can never be conſidered as a hardſhip on them, when their ſituation is compared with that of perſons of their own rank, who have the burden of ſupporting children born to them

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in marriage, without any greater income to maintain them, than the produce of their daily labour. When parents refuſe to enter into theſe ſecurities, the kirk-treaſurer ſhould immediately give up their names to the civil magiſtrate, that they may be proſecuted at law: the ſame ſhould be done when a mother refuſes to declare the father of her child. A conſtant communication of intelligence ſhould ſubſiſt between the kirk-treaſurer, and the profeſſor of midwifery, and thoſe ſurgeons who have private lying-in wards. They ſhould never, if poſſible, receive any women from the country, to be delivered in town, without a proper ſecurity, that neither the mothers, nor their children, ſhall be any burden on the city after their delivery. There can be no hardſhip in this: for a woman in that ſituation generally applies to a lying-in ward, a conſiderable time before her hour of diſtreſs; and if it were known that no woman could be delivered without bringing a previous ſecurity, they would all find methods of complying with the rule, rather than loſe the convenience of being delivered in Edinburgh.

Although it may not be thought proper, that the kirk-treaſurer ſhould inſert, in a public account, the names of the perſons with whom he tranſacts buſineſs of ſo peculiar a nature, he might be obliged to deliver in his accounts upon oath, That they are fairly ſtated; that he has diſcharged his duty to the beſt of his judgement; and has not received under his care any baſtard, who cannot, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, be ſaid to belong to this city. This precaution is neceſſary; becauſe complaints have ſometimes been made, that kirk-treaſurers (the writer is far from meaning to throw a reflection on any particular gentleman who has filled that office) have received baſtard children of women who came from the country to the capital, induced by the hopes of greater concealment, or

better

better accommodation. It cannot be ſuppoſed, that any man would apply to his own private uſe, any of the money paid to him for the public; but it appears ſomewhat ſingular, that the ſum he pays to the Charity-workhouſe does not much exceed what comes into his hands annually from fees at funerals, money on mortmain, and other funds, without reckoning on what they call fornication-fines *: ſo that he is either not ſo vigilant as he might be in taking compoſitions, or the wages paid for nurſing the children muſt be higher than uſual; otherwiſe the whole of the fornication-fines would not be nearly expended on the childrens maintenance before they are turned over on the Charity-workhouſe. All the funds which the kirk-treaſurer at preſent receives, as mentioned in the contract, ought to be paid directly to the treaſurer of the workhouſe, as the contract directs, without paſſing at all through the hands of the kirk-treaſurer. And he ought alſo to pay monthly to the Charity-workhouſe the fines he receives for baſtards. This is a natural conſequence of his ſending the children at once to the workhouſe; for if he is to be freed from the trouble of accounting with the nurſes who ſuckle the children, there is no neceſſity for the money remaining in his hands.

Before bidding adieu to this very perplexing part of the ſubject, the baſtards and foundlings, the writer begs leave to take notice of a circumſtance, which he has often heard mentioned, that the late Mr John Watſon, writer to the ſignet, left by his will a conſiderable ſum of money, under the direction of truſtees, for erecting a foundling-hoſpital in Edinburgh. As the plan of an hoſpital for the ſole reception of foundlings, like thoſe in London and Paris, is believed to be not only impracticable in this city, without the aid of public money, but of itſelf an inſtitution very injurious to the morals

* Vide p. 4.

and

and the population of this country; and as the Charity-workhouſe anſwers all the moſt valuable purpoſes of ſuch an inſtitution, without being liable to its moſt capital objections; if, by proper means, the money left by Mr Watſon could be procured for the uſe of the workhouſe, it is doubted whether the intentions of the donor could be ſo well fulfilled in any other manner.

To bring about a reformation as to the grown-up people in the houſe, is a much more arduous undertaking; but as there ſeems to be great room for amendment, ſomething may be attempted. The great error at preſent ſeems to be, that many of thoſe who are in the houſe, cannot be made to work ſo much as they might eaſily do without any hardſhip being impoſed on them. As this has long been complained of, the managers lately engaged a diſcreet, ſober, perſon, whoſe ſole buſineſs it ſhould be to act as an overſeer: and they allotted a certain quantity of work to each perſon judged to be capable of doing ſomething, according to their age and ſtrength; with an aſſurance, that they ſhould be confined for a certain time to bread and water if they fell ſhort of their taſk; and with a promiſe of an allowance of twopence out of each ſhilling they earned, as an encouragement to them to be diligent. But neither the fear of puniſhment, nor the hope of reward, has been ſufficient to induce them to perform any quantity of work equal to what they might eaſily execute. And it is much doubted, whether it be poſſible, without improper ſeverity, to compel thoſe to work, who are fed and cloathed whether they work or no. This conſideration has ſuggeſted the idea of making their maintenance to depend in a great part upon their work, as the only method of exciting their induſtry.

It ſhould be conſidered, that the aged, the diſeaſed, and infants, who are all incapable of doing any thing for their own ſupport, are proper objects

of public charity, and they alone are intitled to be ſubſiſted by the community. They who are able to work, ſo as entirely to ſupport themſelves by their own labour, ought never to be received into a *workhouſe*; far leſs into an *alms-houſe*. But beſides thoſe two claſſes, of perſons who cannot, and perſons who can, maintain themſelves, there are many in the Charity-workhouſe able to work for a part, but not for the whole, of their ſupport. It is therefore with regard to this claſs, that a reformation ſeems to be moſt wanted: and the idea of an alteration with regard to them is founded on the belief, that every perſon will work more, when the profit accrues to himſelf, than when it is given to another; and that people will be more ſaving of expence, when that is defrayed by themſelves than by the public; as well as on the experience, that hardly any poor perſon applies for admittance to the houſe, who would not be better pleaſed, rather than come into it, to accept of a ſmall penſion of 6 d. 8 d. or 10 d. a-week, out of the houſe, and take their chance of their own labour for the reſt of their ſupport. The inconvenience of giving ſuch weekly penſions out of the houſe, is, that there are many hundreds who would think it no ſhame nor hardſhip to receive ſuch a penſion, perhaps at the ſame time that they might eaſily work for themſelves, or who have friends able to take care of them; yet thoſe people would not conſent to become inhabitants of the poor-houſe. As it is likewiſe very difficult to determine the preciſe degree of neceſſity in the circumſtances of the petitioners, there is no ſaying to what extent ſuch a ſyſtem of penſions might go, if made a general practice: for that reaſon the managers have of late deſiſted from giving any more penſions. The contract ſeems to limit the ſum to be given in out-penſions to the L. 200 allowed annually by the town-council; and this ſum has been invariably diſtributed

tributed by the managers in ſmall penſions to reduced burgeſſes, or to their decayed widows. The outpenſions, therefore, which the managers were formerly in uſe to give rather too indiſcriminately, and ſome of which they ſtill continue to pay to thoſe formerly put on their penſion-roll, ſeem to be in direct contradiction to the words of the contract.

When taſks were allotted to thoſe perſons in the houſe who were thought capable of doing ſomething, it appears by the books, that of about 300 women, 200 are taſked in different quantities of work, according to their ſtrength, from 1 to 4 ſlips of yarn per week: very few ſo low as 1, nor ſo high as 4; but mo:tly at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$, 2, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ ſlips per week, for each of which they receive 3 d. when they work for themſelves without doors. As thoſe taſks were impoſed with great moderation, that there might be no room for any complaints of oppreſſion, it is believed they might all of them perform almoſt one half more than the quantity at which they are rated, if their maintenance depended on their work; and that ſeveral more could do ſome work who are not rated at all.

It is therefore propoſed, that there ſhall be a diviſion made of the whole inhabitants of the houſe, (who are now ſuppoſed to conſiſt entirely of grown-up people, if the plan ſhall be adopted of rearing the children altogether in the country), into thoſe who are utterly unable, by age or infirmities, to do any ſort of work, and thoſe who can work in part for their ſupport. The firſt claſs being proper objects of an alms-houſe, muſt be entirely ſupported; but they muſt be kept totally diſtinct from the other diviſion, by having the two claſſes in different houſes.

To thoſe who can work in part, but not ſufficient for the whole of their ſubſiſtence, a weekly allow-

ance of money muſt be made, according as they may be found more or leſs able to do ſomething for themſelves; not more than the price of ſeven pounds of meal weekly, which may be reckoned ſufficient to keep ſoul and body together, even to a perſon not diſpoſed to work at all; ſo that the public may be certain no one, by this plan, can poſſibly ſtarve. They muſt be decently cloathed at the commencement of this reformation; they muſt be furniſhed with wheels, reels, and diſhes; together with the materials of work from private manufacturers, as at preſent *; and when they return thoſe materials, whether of lint, wool, or cotton, properly worked up, they muſt be paid the full price allowed by the manufacturer: but in all future time, they muſt waſh and keep their cloaths and utenſils in repair; and renew them when they wear out, from the profits of their labour. A certain quantity of coals muſt be furniſhed to them by the houſe, according to the various ſeaſons of the year. If any perſon ſhall be deficient in giving back a ſufficient quantity of worked-up materials, in proportion to the quantity delivered to them raw, by ſpoiling, waſting, or embezzling them; the offenders muſt be committed to the houſe of correction, and afterwards expelled the *workhouſe*

With regard to their food, the managers muſt lay in a ſtock of meal and barley, which the houſe-keeper or butler of the houſe ſhall retail out to the family, at a price to be fixed by the managers, never above prime coſt and charges, which will probably be always ſomewhat under the market-price of E-

* Manufacturers are always glad to furniſh the materials of work to people in ſuch an eſtabliſhment as this, and to pay for the working them up. This is the caſe at preſent. The managers have nothing to do with the materials furniſhed to thoſe in the houſe, who are able to work; the managers merely receive the wages paid by the manufacturers to the work-people; which wages, by the preſent plan, would go to the people themſelves.

dinburgh;

dinburgh ; the rate to be hung up, from time to time, in a conſpicuous part of the houſe, that there may be no impoſition by the perſon intruſted with it, who muſt be accountable to the managers for the value. In order that the truſt may not be too great, when meal or barley is brought to the houſe, it may be lodged in different granaries ; the key of one only to be delivered to the perſon who is to diſtribute the meal ; the keys of the others to be kept by the treaſurer.

If the working-people wiſh to indulge themſelves with a moderate quantity of ale, bread, roots, herrings, greens, or potatoes ; they muſt buy them for themſelves, out of the profits of their labour.

The greateſt difficulty will appear to be, how ſo large a number of people, perhaps 250 or 300 men and women, can prepare victuals for themſelves, and conduct their work, without creating a ſcene of confuſion and diſorder. But it ſhould be conſidered, that how great ſoever the difficulty might be, were they to engage in a large ſcale of houſe-keeping; the boiling a few greens or potatoes, or the making a little pottage, is all that will be neceſſary in the way of cookery. If the children be removed to the country, the aged poor to a ſeparate *alms-houſe*, and all unneceſſary attendants be diſmiſſed, the whole houſe will be left for the working-poor ; by which means, the numbers in each ward will not be above one half of what they are at preſent. There are twelve wards, beſides the ſmall ſide-rooms, and the rooms employed for ſchools and work ; coarſe partitions can be put up, to divide the wards into ſeparate apartments, with one or two common fires to each ward ; ſo that the number of perſons in each diviſion, or apartment, need not exceed half a dozen at moſt. The people will naturally form themſelves into little meſſes, as ſoldiers do in a garriſon ; or they can be arranged into meſſes by the managers ; putting thoſe equally capable of work,

as

as nearly as poſſible, together: which will greatly facilitate the preparation of their victuals, and all other parts of the œconomy of the family.

When any of them fall ſick, they muſt be removed to the *hoſpital*; and when they grow ſo old in the *workhouſe*, as that the managers are well ſatisfied they are no longer capable of work, they may be tranſplanted to the *alms-houſe*: a comfortable retreat, which the working-poor will thus always have in view, towards the concluſion of life.

Should it be thought dangerous to truſt them with the uſe of any other money than what they earn by their daily labour, leſt they ſhould employ it to improper purpoſes, inſtead of laying it out for their daily ſupport; the ſeven pounds weight of meal may be delivered to each perſon weekly, inſtead of an allowance of money to the ſame value. Then their daily gain would go to buy cloaths, or any little comforts they might wiſh to indulge in. And in order to ſecure as far as poſſible a proper application even of that gain, a certain ſum weekly may be ſtopt from it, as from ſoldiers pay, to be laid out on cloaths for their uſe, according as theſe cloaths ſeem to be required.

This reformation will be ſomewhat more difficult with regard to the men, who are at preſent almoſt all idle in the houſe, from a want of ſome proper method of employing themſelves in work. But there are many kinds of work, which a man, even of little ſtrength, may execute, ſuch as working fiſhing-nets, knitting ſtockings, beating chalk, teaſing oakum; none of which are laborious, and all of them of eaſy acquirement. It may be computed, that of about 100 men now in the houſe, at leaſt one half, or one third, can, like the women, do ſomething; and ſhould therefore be put on the ſame footing of a ſmall weekly allowance. It cannot be doubted, that they will all contrive work of various

kinds

kinds for themſelves, when they find that their more comfortable ſubſiſtence is to depend on it.

There cannot be a better evidence of the practicability of this ſcheme of making the working-poor maintain and ſerve themſelves, than the looking at the preſent bridewell, or houſe of correction, as it is called, where a much greater number of perſons prepare their own victuals, and are aſſembled in one room, than can poſſibly be the caſe in the *work-houſe*. Worthleſs as they are, they work and live in the houſe of correction, without any uncommon degree of confuſion. And ſurely more decency and order may be expected from working-poor, all of them conſiderably advanced in years, than are to be found among wretches, inhabitants of a bridewell.

If it ſhall be ſaid, that this new ſcheme of a *work-houſe* will be in fact a bridewell; the anſwer is obvious: In the houſe of correction, they are abſolutely impriſoned, and they get but half the profits of their labour, in addition to the pound of meal allowed them daily: in the working poor-houſe, they will have the whole of their gains, and the liberty of going abroad once a day for two hours, if they chuſe it. They will likewiſe be divided into ſmaller ſocieties or meſſes; conſequently will have leſs occaſion to quarrel, interrupt, or diſturb each other; and it is to be hoped they will live very comfortably, if they pleaſe.

Thus from 250 to 300 men and women will become much more uſeful and laborious members of the community than they are at preſent; and not more perhaps than 100 diſeaſed perſons, and in extreme old age, can properly ſpeaking, be called inhabitants of an *alms-houſe*.

It has been ſtrongly urged by ſome, that it were better to ſupport the poor in their own houſes, by ſmall weekly allowances of money or meal, than to maintain them in an *alms-houſe*. By that method, indeed, much of the expence and detail of manage-

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ment may be ſaved: it may perhaps be more comfortable too to the poor themſelves, to be left in their own houſes, or in the houſes of their relations, who, though they cannot ſupport thoſe objects of charity without public help, can yet perform many little kind offices, to ſweeten to them the decline of life: in return for which, thoſe poor perſons, although unable to work for their bread, may yet, on their parts, give ſome aſſiſtance in the family, by looking after the children in the abſence of parents employed in out-door work, and by many other little pieces of attention, which do not require either ſtrength or activity. But although there be much of truth, and more of humanity, in this repreſentation; and although it may be very eaſily executed in the country, it is much queſtioned, whether it can ever be reduced to practice in a capital. It has been already mentioned, that this mode of giving out-penſions has been found ſubject to a variety of objections; particularly from the continual increaſe of applications, and from the extreme difficulty of diſcovering, whether thoſe who are willing to receive a penſion, but are averſe to enter an *alms-houſe*, be really in that deſtitute ſtate in which they repreſent themſelves; and whether they may not have relations able to take care of them. It is even doubted, whether they be not more comfortably lodged in a well-governed *alms-houſe*, where they have a regular ſupply of wholeſome food, fire, clean cloaths, and medical aſſiſtance, with a conſtant opportunity of attending public worſhip, than in thoſe miſerable hovels, where a whole family of young and old are crowded into garrets or cellars of a few feet ſquare, deprived of light or air, often without fire or proviſions, and always in the midſt of ſmoke, and every ſpecies of naſtineſs.

Another ſtrong objection againſt ſupporting the poor in their own houſes, is, that they are in that caſe left at full liberty to beg when and where they pleaſe,

pleaſe. Thus the burden of maintaining the poor is ſtill leſt on the public, without any one advantage which attends a poor-houſe.

Beſides the number of poor maintained in the poor-houſe, there will always be numbers ſupported by private charity, who are leſs proper objects of a public eſtabliſhment, or who do not chuſe to aſk admittance there: for as the houſe is chiefly ſupported by voluntary contributions; and as different people have different ideas with regard to the mode of diſpoſing of their charity; while ſome beſtow what they can ſpare on a public inſtitution, others perhaps think it better employed on objects more concealed.

With regard to thoſe old people already in the Charity-workhouſe, there can be no diſpute that the plan of maintaining them there, with as much œconomy as poſſible, muſt unavoidably be continued. For, by having lived, many of them, for years together, in that houſe, they have not only become habituated to it, but all their connections with the world are probably, by this time, broken off; ſo that they could find no friend nor relation to take care of them.

It is of infinite conſequence in ſuch an eſtabliſhment as this, to render the detail of houſe-keeping as ſimple as poſſible, in order to prevent either waſte or embezzlement: but there is great room for both, by the preſent method of baking, brewing, and dreſſing and diſtributing victuals; as well as a much greater expence of ſervants than ſhould be. It is therefore propoſed, that even the old people in the *alms-houſe*, who are to be entirely ſupported, without work, ſhall, as far as they can, dreſs their own victuals; ſo as to ſave almoſt entirely the expence of employing ſervants in the kitchen.

Inſtead of baking and brewing in the houſe, and keeping horſes to drive coals, the managers ſhall contract for the delivery of theſe and every other

article of conſumption ready prepared; becauſe it is not doubted, that they can be cheaper ſupplied by tradeſmen, than by entering into all thoſe domeſtic operations within doors.——As the bread and ale, therefore, are to be furniſhed to the houſe ready prepared; the butler ſhall give a regulated tale of bread, and meaſure of ale, to the old people, which the managers muſt check once a-week, by the numbers known to be in the alms-houſe. So far no cookery is required.——But even with regard to porridge and broth, a trial can eaſily be made of the quantities of meal and of barley neceſſary for making two baſons of porridge and a baſon of broth, to each perſon daily, for a week; which the butler can weigh out to them accordingly; the weight to be checked by the managers according to the number of perſons in the alms-houſe; making a proper allowance for the decreaſe of weight, by the delivery in retail.——This will remove the ground of an obſervation which has often been made, That the quantity of meal and barley made uſe of daily, does not vary much, although the number of the family may perhaps be twenty perſons more or leſs.

It cannot be any great hardſhip on the old people, to boil their own porridge and broth, when they have hardly any thing elſe to occupy their time. The weight of coals to be uſed in each ward, ſhould likewiſe be regulated, and checked by the managers. It may even be no great hardſhip on them, to waſh and mend their own cloaths and linen: by their ſerving themſelves in this manner, the ſaving to the houſe, on the article of ſervants, will be very conſiderable: and the people themſelves will ſuffer very little by it: for although it be a moſt laborious taſk, even to fifteen women, the number at preſent employed for that purpoſe, to waſh all the linen uſed by about 700 people; it can be no hardſhip for individuals to waſh the linen uſed by themſelves.

It is believed, that the rooms now uſed as an *hoſpital* for the ſick, the apartment called the *confined room*, and the rooms over the *manufactory*, which are all detached from the great houſe, will be ſufficiently large to contain all the old people, who are to be maintained on the footing of an alms-houſe; for there are 112 perſons lodged there juſt now with great eaſe. By which means, the whole of the large building will be left for the purpoſe of the working poor.

From theſe new modes of dividing the old into two claſſes, and of rearing the young entirely in the country, many of the following perſons, at preſent employed in the ſervice of the houſe, will be unneceſſary.

1 laundry-maid, ſalary,	L. 2	10	0
15 waſhers. If all the people in the houſe waſh their own cloaths, except ſuch as are confined to bed, or diſabled by ſickneſs, not above three or four waſhers will be neceſſary; and thoſe ſhould be paid by piece-work, by the managers.			
12 women, 6 teachers, 4 inſtructors in work, 7 who card and teaſe cotton, } employed about the children.			
1 wheelwright, ſalary will be paid for his work, by thoſe who employ him to mend their working utenſils; and by the piece for work done by order of the managers.	15	12	0
1 carter, ſalary - - -	10	8	0
1 brewer, ſalary - - -	10	8	0
1 overſeer of work, ſalary -	6	10	0
12 men and boys employed as tailors.			

18 women, knitters of ſtockings, and ſemſtreſſes.
4 men and boys, mend ſhoes, and ſhave.
4 men and boys, carpenters.
4 men and boys in the bakehouſe.
9 men and women, cooks in the kitchen.
1 gardener, ſalary - - L. 11 14 0
2 gardener's men.
The garden ſhould be let, and all the greens uſed, paid for by the working-people; or by the managers, for thoſe who are in the alms-houſe.
9 men and women ſcavengers, one or two only will be neceſſary.
1 weaver, ſalary - - 13 0 0
5 weaver's men and boys.
15 women, reelers and winders of yarn, will be paid by their fellow-lodgers for what they do.

Of this long liſt, thoſe only can be properly called hired ſervants, oppoſite to whoſe offices, certain wages are put down; ſuch as the laundry-maid, wheelwright, carter, brewer, &c. all the others are people who have been received into the houſe as objects of charity; but who, being able to work a little, have been employed to take care of the children, and as waſhers, cooks, ſcavengers, &c. Theſe receive no wages; but as an encouragement, as well as recompence of their induſtry, they receive ſmall ſtipulated premiums of a few pence each per week, amounting to about L. 70, as mentioned in page 29. Such of the above liſt as are able to ſupport themſelves, ſhould be diſmiſſed; thoſe who cannot, ſhouldbe put into the workhouſe,

at

at the ſhort allowance; where they will be paid by their fellow-lodgers for what work they do to them: whatever work they do for the people in the alms-houſe, by order of the managers, they ſhould be paid for by the piece, the ſame prices that the ſame work would coſt the managers if done without doors by ſtrangers. This, of itſelf, will be a great ſource of ſupport to the working-poor.

At preſent, a premium of 2d. per ſhilling is allowed to the people, out of their work, by way of encouragement, to make them induſtrious. But when their comfortable maintenance is made to depend on their work, no premium will be neceſſary. It will be an yearly ſaving of L. 50 0 0

There are other premiums mentioned on p. 27. 28, to teachers, coblers, tailors, porters, &c. which ſhould all be ſtruck off, to the yearly amount of about - 70 0 0

Beſides the inferior hired ſervants above mentioned, who are now employed in the houſe, the following perſons have ſalaries:

The treaſurer, who is paid by the city, -	L. 60	0	0
The chaplain, paid by the houſe, - -	20	0	0
The ſurgeon, paid by ditto,	33	6	8
The clerk, ditto,	25	0	0
The houſe-keeper, ditto,	20	0	0
The butler, ditto,	6	0	0
The clerk of the manufactory, ditto,	12	0	0

All theſe, except the treaſurer and ſurgeon, live in the houſe, and have board and waſhing; they eat at one table. The chaplain is juſt now extremely neceſſary

ceſſary in the houſe, for the purpoſe of inſtructing the children, and ſuperintending their education by the teachers; but if the children be brought up altogether in the country, the chaplain will have nothing to do but to ſay prayers to the family. For which purpoſe, a ſtudent of divinity may be procured, to come at ſtated hours, morning and evening, for a fourth part of the preſent chaplain's ſalary: ſo that, beſides ſaving his board and waſhing, there will be an annual gain of - - - L. 15 0 0

The table kept in the houſe, for the houſe-keeper, chaplain, clerk, &c. has often been complained of, as too expenſive. In order to avoid every reflection of that kind, it were better to lay the table entirely aſide, and to give them a certain allowance of board-wages, for entertainment and waſhing; but ſtill with their lodging in the houſe. Even at the rate of 7 s. a-week to each perſon, the ſaving to the houſe will be very conſiderable. The houſe-keeper's table alſo ſupplies dinner, at preſent, to ſome lunatics in bedlam, who pay board to the houſe on that account. When perſons of better circumſtances, in that unhappy ſituation, are placed there, their friends may agree with the houſe-keeper for a certain board, independent of an allowance to the houſe for lodging and attendance.

Another great object of reformation muſt be, the keeping the people entirely within doors. At preſent, while there is free ingreſs and egreſs to all corners of the houſe, it is impoſſible to prevent proviſions and coals from being pilfered and carried away: nor can the managers, with all their vigilance, hinder both men and women of the houſe, from begging in the ſtreets; nor from plying without doors,

doors, in the character of ſcavengers, and doing other menial offices in private families, at the ſame time that they are maintained in the houſe. Theſe facilities, too, tend greatly to increaſe the number of applications for reception into the houſe. It is therefore of great conſequence to prevent an almshouſe from being too deſirable an abode; at the ſame time that it ſhould be carefully guarded from all unneceſſary hardſhip.

In order to do this, the houſe muſt be carefully incloſed on all ſides by a wall; ſo that there may be no acceſs to it, or from it, but by one gate; which muſt be kept conſtantly locked; the key to lie in the poſſeſſion of the houſe-keeper; and none of the people ſuffered to go out, on any pretence whatever, except at a ſtated hour, once a-day; when any perſon may go abroad, on obtaining the houſe-keeper's permiſſion, with the condition of returning within two hours; at which time, the gate ſhall again be locked, until the ſtated hour next day. The treaſurer, ſurgeon, clerk, butler, and each manager, may have a paſs-key, for their own uſe only: and a bell at the gate may ring into the houſe-keeper's apartment, to give notice when any ſtranger of better faſhion comes to the outer gate, deſiring admittance. Any perſon of low rank, wiſhing to viſit any of the poor people in the houſe, muſt come at the ſtated hour of admiſſion, and muſt depart when the gate is again locked up. Any of the family, not returning within the limited hour, muſt be lodged in the houſe of correction, during a limited time, before being re-admitted into the houſe.

If ſuch a regulation be properly put in practice, it will produce excellent effects; and perhaps fewer will apply to be received into the houſe, from a diſlike of the confinement: which, however, can be no real hardſhip on any; as there will be ſpace enough within the incloſure, for the purpoſe of their getting freſh air and exerciſe.

A learned judge has admirably diſplayed the abſurdity, as well as unhappy conſequences, of the preſent ſyſtem of the poor-laws in England *. He has ſhown, by the moſt irrefragable arguments, that they are infallibly productive of idleneſs in the poor; who too often are careleſs of labouring even for their preſent ſubſiſtence, far leſs for their future ſupport in old age, or for making any proviſion for their children, when they know, that the pariſh is bound to maintain them; and that the levying a heavy poor's rate on the people can hardly fail to damp, if not totally to deſtroy, that ſpirit of private charity and benevolence, which is the moſt diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of a man and a Chriſtian; ſince few can afford to add any thing by voluntary donation to what they are legally compelled to pay for that purpoſe; not to mention, that one is leſs willing to give alms to a poor object, even though that object appear to be in real diſtreſs, when they know, that the diſtreſs is occaſioned by the villany, or the careleſſneſs, of thoſe who are intruſted with the management of the poor's money, and that to relieve a pauper is in fact only giving relief to the pariſh.

But it is hoped, that the plan now ſuggeſted will, in a good meaſure, obviate both theſe inconveniencies. The money employed for the ſupport of the poor will flow from the only real ſource of charity, the unconſtrained contributions of the inhabitants: for the ſmall annual rate which has been paid for many years by the poſſeſſors of houſes in the city can hardly be called an exception; ſince it makes but a very inconſiderable part of the ſums annually collected for the ſupport of the workhouſe.

Again, by this plan, the poor will not be rendered idle and profligate, as when they are freed from all neceſſity of labour, by having an infallible maintenance provided for them by law: they will, in-

* Lord Kames's Sketches of the Hiſtory of Man, vol. 2. p. 36.

deed,

deed, be ſo far on a better footing than thoſe who are unconnected with any public eſtabliſhment of charity; that theſe laſt are left to truſt entirely to private benevolence for their ſole ſupport; while thoſe have a pound of meal each day, beſides fire and lodging. But it can hardly be ſuppoſed, that ſo ſlender an advantage will induce people to ſit down in abſolute idleneſs, contented with their bread and water, without cloaths, and without any other comfort of life, who, by a very moderate exertion of labour and induſtry, can procure to themſelves many little gratifications of better food.

But all hopes of any ſubſtantial reformation will be vain, if the mode of admittance into the houſe, whether as inhabitants of the *alms-houſe* or *work-houſe*, be not put under a better regulation than at preſent. In either caſe, the managers muſt receive the moſt undoubted proofs of the petitioners title to the city's charity. None ſhould be received into the *alms-houſe*, under a certain age, ſuppoſe ſixty years, except they be rendered objects by ſome viſible diſtreſs or accident: their age, their reſidence in the city during a certain number of years, and their having been engaged during that time in ſome uſeful employment, together with their poverty, muſt all be certified by the miniſter, and two elders, of the pariſh to which the petitioners belong, as well as by one or two creditable houſekeepers if poſſible; and the miniſter's certificate muſt declare, that he and the elders have actually viſited in perſon the objects he atteſts. It is hoped the Reverend Clergy will not refuſe to undertake this piece of trouble, in the way of their duty; and that they will not content themſelves, as they often do at preſent, with qualifying their certificate, *on the credit of the elder*.

It would greatly facilitate the obtaining a knowledge of the real circumſtances of the poor, if liſts were made up once a quarter, or half-year, by the

conſtables, divided into different diſtricts. Theſe liſts ſhould expreſs the number, names, and occupation of each family, diſtinguiſhing children, ſervants, and lodgers.

Theſe regulations, if ſtrictly attended to, will help to remove a very extraordinary ſpecies of nuiſance, intimately connected with this ſubject, which is of a very ſerious nature. —— There are, it ſeems, whole lanes of mean houſes, in various parts of the city and ſuburbs, ſolely tenanted by perſons in the very loweſt ſtage of indigence; where they are crowded together four or five in a very ſmall apartment; the beds of which are let out each at a penny a-night, or at ſixpence a-week. As this pittance is paid per advance, the landlord receives his rent more regularly than many proprietors of greater income: and the inducement to the miſerable tenant is, that if they can beg, or ſteal, or make any ſhift to exiſt, for three years *, they then conſider themſelves as having a legal title to the city's charity; at the expiration of that term, they come to the managers of the workhouſe, with an unexceptionable claim of poverty indeed, but with no juſt title to be taken care of. This ſhould be put a ſtop to, if poſſible, by accurately inveſtigating the ſituation of every inhabitant of the city, by means of the liſts above propoſed.

All ſtranger poor, whether found begging or not, ſhould be inſtantly diſmiſſed the city, by proper authority. Thoſe found begging in the ſtreets might, previous to their diſmiſſion from the city, be confined during a limited time in the houſe of correction, on bread and water, and clean ſtraw, only.

For the purpoſe of apprehending, and keeping the ſtreets clear of begging poor, it is humbly pro-

* By a deciſion of the court of ſeſſion, a reſidence of three years is preſumed to be ſufficient to give a title to the city's charity; but that term is obviouſly too ſhort.

poſed,

poſed, that a greater number of conſtables ſhould be appointed. The preſent number is certainly too inconſiderable to anſwer the ends propoſed by them. Conſtables are preſumed to be the moſt proper perſons for making up liſts of the inhabitants, for expelling ſtranger poor, and apprehending beggars: for conſtables are armed with legal authority for thoſe purpoſes. And the ſeparate juriſdictions of the Weſt-church, Canongate, &c. will no doubt gladly co-operate for ſo ſalutary a reformation.

There is one ſpecies of begging which calls loudly on every feeling of humanity to put an immediate ſtop to it. Begging in general is a voluntary occupation; and if thoſe who practiſe it are ſubjected to the inclemency of the weather, in the courſe of their walks, they chearfully ſubmit to it for the ſake of the pleaſure and advantage they derive from ſuch a roving, idle life. A ſturdy beggar, who is the peſt of ſociety, will undergo any hardſhip, provided he can but procure what he conſiders as indiſpenſable to his happineſs, a warm fire at night, a hot ſupper, a dram, and his trull. But there are hundreds of children, from five years old and upwards, whoſe parents are inhuman enough to ſend them abroad in the morning to beg throughout the day; and compel them to remain in the ſtreets until they are almoſt petrified with cold, at the lateſt hours of the evening, and in the moſt rigorous ſeaſons of the year.—Every one muſt have obſerved ſuch unhappy infants lying in corners of the ſtreets, endeavouring, by their cries, to attract the pity of the paſſenger; and afraid to go home, without ſome alms, leſt they ſhould be beaten by their parents for their want of ſucceſs. It is very difficult to prevent every degree of wretchedneſs cauſed by thoſe who are chiefly diſtinguiſhed by their barbarity; but the utmoſt endeavours ſhould be uſed to find out the parents of ſuch children,

and inflict a proper degree of correction on them. If the children be actually deſerted, as it is believed there are many ſuch, who are employed by beggars, not their parents, as implements of extorting charity, they ſhould be properly taken care of.

In order ſtill farther to regulate the admiſſion of poor into the houſe, ſome change ſhould be made on the plan the ordinary managers have long practiſed, with regard to their weekly meetings. When the fifteen ordinary managers ſubdivided themſelves into three committees of five each, it was probably meant to give them as little unneceſſary trouble as poſſible, by requiring the attendance of each manager only every third week; except when one of each committee is ſummoned to attend the other committees, out of his ordinary courſe, to give his opinion in the character of *a correſpondent*, as they call it. But it is hardly poſſible to ſuppoſe, that three bodies of five men each ſhall all have the ſame way of thinking, with regard to the merit or demerit of petitioners for admittance, or in other parts of the ordinary management. By this means it happens, that poor people are rejected one week by one committee, while perſons in ſimilar circumſtances are received into the houſe next week by another. This gives room for murmurings among the poor people, and complaints of partiality; and is indeed wrong in itſelf. It were therefore better, that no poor perſon were either put on the roll of penſions, or received into the houſe, but at a meeting of the fifteen managers, once in three weeks, or even once a-month. This length of time from one day of admiſſion to another, would not be conſidered as a hardſhip by the poor people, when once known to be eſtabliſhed as a cuſtom. And for the benefit of thoſe who ſtand in need of immediate relief, the treaſurer might have a power of diſtributing, as far as a crown a-week, among indigent perſons applying to him, whoſe diſtreſs does not admit

admit of their waiting till a monthly meeting be held.

Petitions for admittance ſhould always be lodged with the treaſurer a day or two before the meeting of the managers, that he may have time to make inquiry, if neceſſary, as to the truth of the petition, as a check on thoſe who atteſt it.

As the receiving and determining the merit of petitions, takes up three fourths at leaſt of the time of the meeting of the managers; the weekly meetting of five managers would have only to beſtow a quarter, or half an hour, at a time, in inſpecting the management of the houſe, hearing complaints, and puniſhing abuſes.

Three of the managers ſhould always attend when the board of the children is paid; that they may judge of the care of the keepers, by the health and appearance of the children.—— The out-door penſioners ſhould be viſited half-yearly by the managers; that they may judge whether any favourable alteration has happened in the health or circumſtances of the penſioners; ſo as to render the allowance from the houſe unneceſſary.—— The managers ſhould annually publiſh a liſt of the names of every perſon ſupported by the houſe, within or without doors, and a liſt of charitable contributors to its ſupport, together with an abſtract of their accounts, for the ſatisfaction of the public.

In order to relieve the houſe of a very heavy burden which they are now ſubjected to, by the number of ſtreet-porters, chairmen, and hackney-coachmen, who, many of them, at their deaths leave widows and children, without any thing to ſupport them; the number of thoſe ſtreet-porters, and of hackney-chairs, and hackney-coaches, might perhaps be limited by the magiſtrates; and each perſon obtaining a licence from the town-council, to exerciſe any of thoſe employments within the city, ſhould pay a trifling annual rate to the

the Charity-workhouſe. How trifling ſoever the rate might be, it would always be a great help when paid by ſo great a number.

No perſon ſhould ever be received into the houſe, who has a claim to be ſupported out of the public funds of any corporation or ſociety to which their huſbands had been regular contributors during their lifetime, in order to ſecure a penſion to their widows; except the penſion ſo due be continued by the corporation to the Charity-workhouſe.

An application ſhould be made by the managers, with the concurrence of the magiſtrates to give it additional weight, to every ſect or ſociety who aſſemble for the purpoſe of religious worſhip, ſeparate from the eſtabliſhed church, requeſting an annual contribution, or collection, in their meeting-houſes, or ſuch other aid as they ſhall judge moſt proper. An aid, or collection, of this kind, from thoſe houſes of worſhip, can be no hardſhip: it is preſumed all the members of thoſe congregations who are able, give ſomething to the general public collections made from time to time, for relieving the houſe from its difficulties: and the aid now pointed out is intended to prevent thoſe difficulties, conſequently to render general public collections unneceſſary for the future.

While the above-mentioned collections at places of ſeparate worſhip, are intended in ſome reſpect to make up for the deficiency in the collections at the eſtabliſhed churches; another mode has been ſuggeſted, of drawing ſomething from ſome of thoſe who abſent themſelves from every church, by applying to parliament, for a double toll on Sundays, at all the toll-bars round the city; and that a bar ſhall be erected at the Abbey-hill, where there is none at preſent, to be uſed on Sundays only. Families living in the neighbourhood, who come to town to church on Sundays, might eaſily be exempted from this

this additional toll, by means of paſs-tickets. A tax of this nature on thoſe who travel on Sundays, either for buſineſs or amuſement, would be an unexceptionable, as well as an effectual method of adding to the income of the houſe.

As the treaſurer of the workhouſe receives the revenues in ſmall ſums, from day to day, he can only buy proviſions and neceſſaries in the ſame manner: he is therefore deprived, from want of money, of the advantage to be reaped from laying in a ſtock of proviſions at thoſe ſeaſons of the year when proviſions are cheapeſt. This can only be remedied, by his having a caſh-account with one of the banks, of which he may avail himſelf when he ſees a favourable opportunity; the money thus drawn out of the account, to be replaced, as the funds of the houſe come in.

The only difficulty is, with regard to the ſecurity to be given to the bank. The treaſurer cannot be expected to find it; and his own alone would not be accepted of. Within theſe few years, ſeveral ſums have been borrowed from the banks; for which the managers and magiſtrates, as individuals, pledged their perſonal credit. This may do as to a loan, which is to laſt only for a ſhort time, and to continue only during the time that the bondſmen act as managers and magiſtrates: but the caſe is widely different as to a caſh-account; which is ſuppoſed to be permanent, and to laſt for many years; perhaps after thoſe magiſtrates and managers who become bound, are out of office, or dead; yet, notwithſtanding either of theſe contingencies, their ſecurity would ſtill remain, at a time when they have no ſhare in the application of the money, nor any poſſibility of knowing how it is laid out. The only natural ſecurity, therefore, which ſeems proper to be given, is that of the city as a corporate body, (if the magiſtrates have the power to do it); for the city is the natural parent and guardian of the

Charity-

Charity-workhouſe, and moſt intereſted in its ſupport.

In the ſame manner, it would greatly reduce the expence of maintenance, if the magiſtrates were to make contracts for a term of years, at ſuch times as proviſions are cheapeſt. As a ſecurity to the corporation, the meal and barley thus bought by contract, might remain in granaries belonging to the magiſtrates, from which it ſhould be taken from time to time, as wanted, for the uſe of the workhouſe.

The allowance by the magiſtrates to the Charity-workhouſe, for the maintenance of criminals in the houſe of correction, is too ſmall; ſo that the managers are loſers by the bargain. The agreement was made in 1748, that the magiſtrates ſhould pay at the rate of three half-pence *per diem* for each criminal, in conſideration of which, the managers furniſh each of them with a pound of meal a-day, beſides ſalt, and coal, and candle. But the price of meal at that time was not near ſo high as it is at preſent. It is not doubted, that the magiſtrates will ſee the equity of adjuſting the daily allowance to the price of meal at the time, whether it be high or low.

It is ſuſpected, that there is an abuſe in the article of coffins furniſhed by the Charity-workhouſe to people who die in poverty out of the houſe. Inſtead of making them in the houſe, the managers ſhould contract for the delivery of them, according to the ſize, at a fixed price, by a carpenter, who can furniſh them cheaper than the houſe can make them, by working up the refuſe of his wood in that manner. No coffin ſhould be given, except in conſequence of a certificate from the miniſter and two elders of the pariſh where the poor perſon died.

If this plan of reformation, after mature deliberation and amendment, ſhould be approved of, the proper

proper time for carrying it into execution will be during the ſummer; againſt which time, all the neceſſary preparations may be made, of incloſing the houſe, ſubdividing the wards, &c. This reformation muſt be effected jointly by the magiſtrates, general ſeſſions, and managers of the workhouſe; and it is not doubted, that each of thoſe bodies will chearfully take an active hand in the execution. It will be eſſentially neceſſary that they ſhould meet together, in order to make ſuch alterations on the contract as may be proper, and give authority to the managers to proceed in the execution.

As it will require an extreme degree of vigilance at firſt, on the part of the managers, as well as an unuſual exertion of authority, it will be of great ſervice, if always one of the Honourable Magiſtrates will conſent to be a manager; in order that he may proceed in a ſummary manner with any refractory members of the family.

To ſay exactly what the ſaving would be of expences by a reformation of this kind, where the whole ſyſtem of management is, as it were, to be changed, is impoſſible: but it is obvious, from the number of ſervants to be diſmiſſed, and other articles of ſaving, that the expence muſt be very conſiderably diminiſhed.

Each perſon's maintenance in the houſe coſts at preſent about 20 d. per week, or L. 4 : 6 : 8 *per annum.* Suppoſe, on an average, the numbers in the houſe are,

300 women.
100 men.
100 boys.
100 girls.

600 at L. 4 : 6 : 8, L. 2600 0 0

Carried forward

Brought forward		L. 2600	0 0
Deduct work done by the people, which at preſent goes to the profit of the houſe, but by the new plan will go to the people themſelves, it amounts juſt now, on an average of eight years, as by the printed report 23d June 1773, to		325	0 0
		L. 2275	0 0

By the new plan.

100 women.			
75 men.			
175	Suppoſed incapable of working, and therefore maintained in the almshouſe, as before, at L. 4 : 6 : 8,	L. 758 6 8	
200 women.			
25 men.			
225	At an allowance of 7 lb. weight of meal weekly, ſuppoſed at 1 s. per peck, will coſt	511 17 6	
100 boys.			
100 girls.			
200	Suppoſed at a board of 15 s. per quarter in the country, at an average,	600 0 0	
		1870 4 2	
Carried forward		L. 404 15 10	

Brought forward		L. 404	15 10
The boys and girls at nurſe, or under four or five years, the age at which they are now brought into the houſe, will continue at a board of 20 s. per quarter, as at preſent.			
Wages of ſervants who will be rendered unneceſſary by the new plan, as mentioned at p. 29. -	L. 70 0 0		
Small premiums paid the people for menial offices done in the houſe,	70 0 0		
	L. 140 0 0		
Suppoſe only one half of that ſum to be ſaved, -		70	0 0
The premium of 2 d. per ſhilling paid the people for work done in the houſe, the whole of which will be ſaved,		50	0 0
Difference of expence in favour of the new plan,		L. 524	15 10

The children at nurſe, the people in Bedlam and Bridewell, and the out-penſioners, (as far as the city's donation of L. 200, *vide* p. 18.), will undergo no variation in regard to expence.

The amount of the additional public collections made at ſuch times as the houſe was in difficulty for want of money, have been ſtated at L. 10,735, (*vide* p. 6.) during thirty-ſeven years ſince the houſe has been opened, or about L. 290 *per annum*. This may with certainty be reckoned the ſum, on an a-

verage, which the funds of the houſe have fallen ſhort of the annual expence. It is therefore evident, that had the plan now propoſed been adopted at the opening of the houſe, even ſuppoſing the above calculation of L. 525 of annual ſaving to be very conſiderably over-rated, the houſe never would have been in difficulties, nor thoſe frequent appeals to the public generoſity been at all neceſſary. And it is hoped, if this plan can be carried into execution, that the ordinary funds of the houſe will prove ſufficient, with frugal management, to ſupport this uſeful eſtabliſhment hereafter.

In order farther to ſatisfy the public, that the people may not only exiſt, but be on as good a footing as many an induſtrious labourer's family, with regard to maintenance, let it be conſidered, that four perſons in the workhouſe, in one meſs, have an allowance of 28 lb. weight of meal weekly, which, at 1 s. per week, coſts 3 s. 6 d. Each of the four can at leaſt gain 6 d. by their labour; which, added to the former, gives that meſs 5 s. 6 d. to ſpend weekly. But how many labourers are there, with a family of three children (ſuppoſing the wife's labour to be equal to her own maintenance; which, however, with the care of three children, can hardly be the caſe), who have nothing but their ſhilling a-day, or ſix ſhillings a-week, for the ſupport of the whole? This is exactly equal to the ſum allowed for the ſupport of the meſs of four in the poor-houſe: for the additional ſixpence a-week in favour of the labourer will do no more than pay for fire, and the rent of his hovel: yet labourers in that ſituation are not commonly conſidered as objects of charity.

Should this new plan be found on trial to fail, though apparently well contrived in ſpeculation, there will be nothing ſo eaſy as to replace things exactly on their former footing.

In

In the courſe of ſo capital a reformation, and ſuch a total change of the ſyſtem of the houſe, whoever ſhall have the courage to attempt it, muſt have patience to hear, and vigour of mind to diſregard, the clamour of the people within, and the popular outcry of thoſe without doors; who are always ſufficiently diſpoſed to load all public adminiſtration with abuſe. But, as long as the managers have a full conviction, that the plan is a good one in idea; and that they are attentive, to the beſt of their power, to prevent all unneceſſary hardſhip or ſeverity in the execution; they may ſafely deſpiſe all unjuſt and injurious reflection, and reſt ſatisfied with the conſcious ſatisfaction that they are uſefully employed in doing their duty.

THIS plan is now humbly ſubmitted to the conſideration of the inhabitants, who are ſo eſſentially intereſted in the proper management of the funds very liberally beſtowed for the ſupport of the poor. It is earneſtly requeſted, that thoſe who have had better opportunity than the writer, of knowing the police of other countries in regard to the poor, or have employed their thoughts on a ſubject of ſuch general utility, will be pleaſed to point out any objections that may be offered againſt the plan, or any improvements which may render it more perfect, or more practicable. Every the ſlighteſt hint will be gratefully received. And letters addreſſed to the care of the clerk of the Charity-workhouſe, will be carefully attended to,——by

A CITIZEN of EDINBURGH.